

# Portland East Quadrangle, Maine

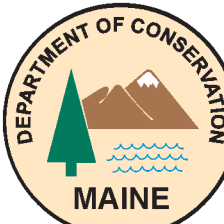
Surficial geologic mapping by  
**Alexa Bernotavicz**

Digital cartography by:  
**Robert A. Johnston**

**Robert G. Marvinney**  
*State Geologist*

Cartographic design and editing by:  
**Robert D. Tucker**

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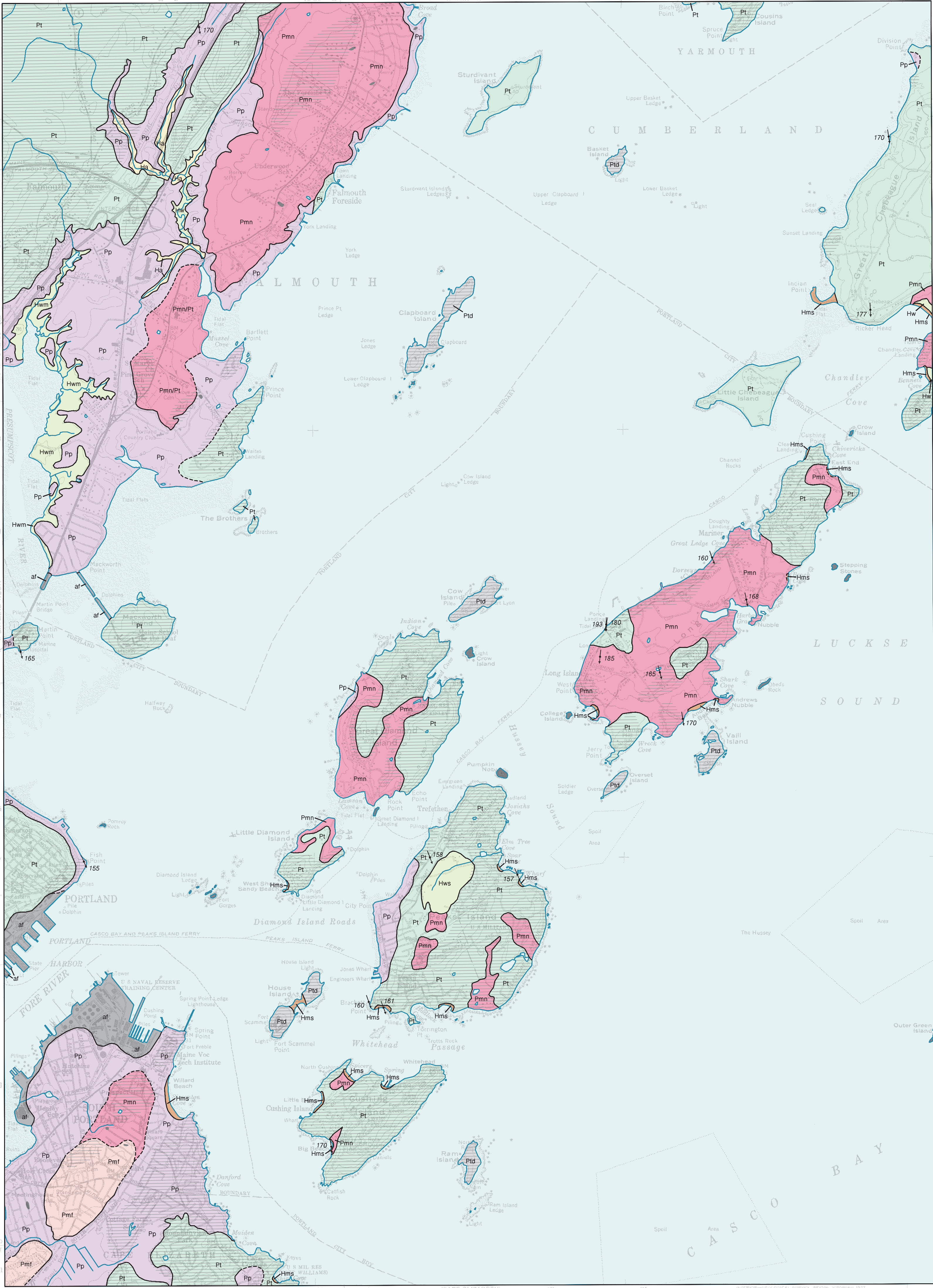
## Maine Geological Survey

Address: 22 State House Station, Augusta, Maine 04333  
Telephone: 207-287-2801 E-mail: mgs@maine.gov  
Home page: <http://www.maine.gov/doc/nrmc/nrmc.htm>

**Open-File No. 99-95**  
**1999**

For additional information,  
see Open-File Report 99-126.

# Surficial Geology



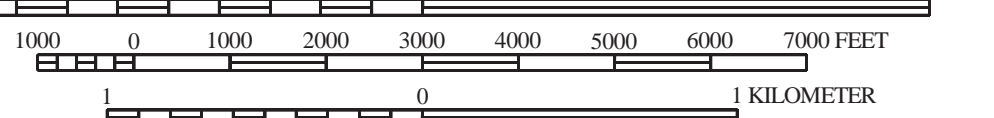
### SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Surficial geologic mapping by Alexa Bernotavicz completed during the 1994 field season; funding for this work provided by the U. S. Geological Survey COGEMAP program. J. Michael Clinch conducted additional surficial materials field work during the 1988 field season, funded by the U.S. Geological Survey COGEMAP program. Geologic unit designations and contacts revised and matched to adjacent quadrangles in 1999 by MGS geologists.



Quadrangle Location

SCALE 1 : 24,000



CONTOUR INTERVAL 20 FEET



Topographic base from U.S. Geological Survey Portland East quadrangle, scale 1:24,000 using standard U.S. Geological Survey topographic map symbols.

The use of industry, firm, or local government names on this map is for location purposes only and does not implicate responsibility for any present or potential effects on the natural resources.

### HOLOCENE

- af** **Artificial fill** - A mixture of till, sand, and gravel that has been moved and dumped in order to elevate roadways and foundation structures as well as piers and industrial developments on the Portland and South Portland waterfronts.
- Hms** **Marine shoreline deposits** - Modern beach deposits consisting of sand, pebbles, and cobbles. Formed during the reworking of older surficial sediments by the ocean.
- Ha** **Stream alluvium** - Sand, gravel, and silt. Deposited on flood plains and stream beds by postglacial streams.
- Hw** **Wetland** - Silt, clay, sand, muck or peat formed by accumulation of sediments and organic materials in depressions or other poorly drained areas. Swamps (Hws) are generally tree-covered; marshes (Hwm) have grassland vegetation.

### PLEISTOCENE

- Pmn** **Marine nearshore deposits** - Deposits of sand interbedded with gravel and silt. Formed by reworking of sediments by waves and currents during the regression of the sea. Occurs as a thin cover over bedrock or older glacial deposits such as till.
- Pmn/Pt** **Marine nearshore deposits overlying till** - Area where till is locally overlain by marine sand and gravel.
- Pp** **Presumpscot Formation** - Fine-grained, gray to bluish-gray silt and clay with minor sand. Deposited during the marine submergence of the coastal zone. Occurs as a blanket deposit over bedrock and older glacial sediments. Locally fossiliferous.

- Pmf** **Glaciomarine fan** - Interbedded sand and gravel. Locally draped by glaciomarine mud (unit Pp). Deposited below former sea level, where sediments washed into the ocean from the glacier margin.
- Pt** **Till** - Poorly sorted, variably compact sediment deposited directly by glacial ice. Consists of a heterogeneous mixture of clay, silt, sand, gravel, and boulders.
- Ptd** **Thin drift, undifferentiated** - Thin, patchy cover of till, Presumpscot Formation, and/or nearshore deposits overlying bedrock.
- Thin drift area** - Gray areas are individual bedrock outcrops, with little or no surficial sediment cover. Ruled pattern indicates areas of abundant bedrock outcrop and/or areas where the mapped surficial sediments are generally less than 10 ft (3 m) thick.
- Contact** - Boundary between map units. Dashed where location is uncertain or inferred.
- Glacial striation locality** - Striations, grooves, or other ice-flow indicators on glaciated bedrock surface. Number indicates azimuth (in degrees) of ice-flow direction. Dot marks point of observation.

### USES OF SURFICIAL GEOLOGY MAPS

A surficial geology map shows all the loose materials such as till (commonly called hardpan), sand and gravel, or clay, which overlie solid ledge (bedrock). Bedrock outcrops and areas of abundant bedrock outcrops are shown on the map, but varieties of the bedrock are not distinguished (refer to bedrock geology map). Most of the surficial materials are deposits formed by glacial and deglacial processes during the last stage of continental glaciation, which began about 25,000 years ago. The remainder of the surficial deposits are the products of postglacial geologic processes, such as river floodplains, or are attributed to human activity, such as fill or other land-modifying features.

The map shows the areal distribution of the different types of glacial features, deposits, and landforms as described in the map explanation. Features such as striations and moraines can be used to reconstruct the movement and position of the glacier and its margin, especially as the ice sheet melted. Other ancient features include shorelines and deposits of glacial lakes or the glacial sea, now long gone from the state. This glacial geologic history of the quadrangle is useful to the larger understanding of past earth climate, and how our region of the world underwent recent geologically significant climatic and environmental changes. We may then be able to use this knowledge in anticipation of future similar changes for long-term planning efforts, such as coastal development or waste disposal.

Surficial geology maps are often best used in conjunction with related maps such as surficial materials maps or significant sand and gravel aquifer maps for anyone wanting to know what lies beneath the land surface. For example, these maps may aid in the search for water supplies, or economically important deposits such as sand and gravel for aggregate or clay for bricks or pottery. Environmental issues such as the location of a suitable landfill site or the possible spread of contaminants are directly related to surficial geology. Construction projects such as locating new roads, excavating foundations, or siting new homes may be better planned with a good knowledge of the surficial geology of the site. Refer to the list of related publications below.

### OTHER SOURCES OF INFORMATION

- Bernotavicz, A., 1999, Surficial geology of the Portland East 7.5-minute quadrangle, Cumberland County, Maine: Maine Geological Survey, Open-File Report 99-126, 3 p.
- Bernotavicz, A., 1999, Surficial materials of the Portland East quadrangle, Maine: Maine Geological Survey, Open-File Map 99-39.
- Thompson, W. B., 1979, Surficial geology handbook for coastal Maine: Maine Geological Survey, 68 p. (out of print)
- Thompson, W. B., and Borns, H. W., Jr., 1985, Surficial geologic map of Maine: Maine Geological Survey, scale 1:500,000.
- Thompson, W. B., Crossen, K. J., Borns, H. W., Jr., and Andersen, B. G., 1989, Glaciomarine deltas of Maine and their relation to late Pleistocene-Holocene crustal movements, in Anderson, W. A., and Borns, H. W., Jr. (eds.), Neotectonics of Maine: Maine Geological Survey, Bulletin 40, p. 43-67.